

in foster care have chronic medical problems. Subsidized guardianship, like the Federal adoption assistance program, provides needed support to these kinship caregivers to afford appropriate care for these vulnerable children.

Further, kinship navigator programs serve as critical supports to the millions of grandparent caregivers who preventively took on the care of their grandchildren to keep them out of the foster care system. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, there are approximately 2.1 million children living with grandparents or other relatives with no parent present; however, only about 145,000 children in the foster care system live with kinship caregivers. This means that just under 2 million children are being cared for outside of the system and do not have access to subsidized guardianship payments. We must promote kinship navigator programs to help these caregivers understand and access supports to support our youngest citizens.

Research clearly shows that kinship foster care families are safer, more stable placements that are more likely to keep children connected with their siblings and communities than non-relative placements. Further, these placements are cost effective. In Illinois, cost studies found a projected savings of approximately \$48 million over 10 years compared to a matched control group that did not have this option. For these reasons, it is imperative that we promote kinship caregiving within the foster care system, and required notification to relatives is an important step to this end.

The issue of grandparents raising grandchildren is very significant for Illinois and for Chicago specifically. My Congressional District has the highest percentage of children living with kinship caregivers in the U.S., with two other Chicago districts following closely behind. The legislation promises critical financial support to family members raising relatives in foster care. We have more to do, but I applaud the House of Representatives for passing this bill that will do so much for so many.

**COMMENDING THE FIREFIGHTERS
FROM CALIFORNIA AND
THROUGHOUT THE UNITED
STATES FOR THEIR COURAGEOUS
ACTIONS AND SACRIFICES
IN FIGHTING THE CALIFORNIA
WILDFIRES**

SPEECH OF

HON. LYNN C. WOOLSEY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 9, 2008

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise in recognition of the brave firefighters from across California and around the country who have courageously risked their lives to halt the spread of wildfires that continue to devastate California. The dedication and determination of our Nation's first responders and firefighters have helped dramatically contain the nearly 1,800 wildfires that have burned over 829,000 acres, or 1,300 square miles, across California.

These fires have been the most intense and widespread in California's history, and thousands of brave men and women have honored the call to protect our state from these fires. More than 150 firefighters from Sonoma Coun-

ty, in my Congressional District have responded to the fires, and firefighters from Santa Rosa served more than 22 days each, totaling 4,000 hours of their time in June. More than 80 Marin firefighters and other support personnel have been dispatched to fight fires throughout Northern California. In addition to the unrivaled contributions of the California's firefighters, Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger called up 2,400 National Guard troops join the fire crews. Furthermore, firefighters from 41 states, Puerto Rico, Mexico, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand have all offered their support, resources, and manpower during this crisis.

The bravery of these committed first responders and the tremendous sacrifices they made to help fight California's fires have not gone unnoticed. Our firefighters deserve the highest commendation for putting themselves in the line of danger. That's why I am proud to support H. Res. 1322, a resolution honoring the firefighters from California and throughout the United States for their heroism and sacrifices in fighting the California wildfires. These brave men and women deserve no less.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. TOM COLE

OF OKLAHOMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 17, 2008

Mr. COLE of Oklahoma. Madam Speaker, on Wednesday, July 16, 2008, I missed the rollcall vote No. 507, had I been present and voting, I would have voted as follows:

Rollcall vote No. 507: "nay" (On Passage of H.R. 415 to amend the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act to designate segments of the Taunton River in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts as a component of the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System).

A TRIBUTE TO POLK ROBISON

HON. RANDY NEUGEBAUER

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 17, 2008

Mr. NEUGEBAUER. Madam Speaker, I would like to take this time to remember Polk Robison, a lifelong supporter of District 19's Texas Tech University. Mr. Robison passed away June 27, 2008, at the age of 96.

Polk Robison was best known for his service to Texas Tech Athletics, where he was a champion basketball player, coach, and athletic director. Mr. Robison's devotion to his alma mater helped push Texas Tech Athletics into the Southwest and Big 12 Conferences and into the national spotlight.

Born in Springfield, Tennessee, Mr. Robison and his family moved to Texas when he was 14. He graduated from Lubbock High School and then from Texas Tech in 1934, earning not only a degree in journalism, but also three consecutive Border Conference basketball championships as a center.

Mr. Robison's love of sports led to an early career in coaching football at Burk Burnett High School, which soon turned to working for General Motors in Houston. His passion for athletics and Texas Tech brought him back to the

university in 1941 as an assistant football and basketball coach. The following year, Mr. Robison moved into the head basketball coach position and remained there for 18 seasons, accumulating a record of 249–196, three Border Conference titles, and a Southwest Conference championship—ranking him second in all-time victories of any Texas Tech coach.

His talents extended beyond the basketball program. Mr. Robison served a short stint as the university's tennis coach, leading the team to a Southwest Conference championship.

He made a gradual change into a ten-year career as Texas Tech's athletic director and retired in 1977 while serving as the athletics administrator for finance and development. He continued to attend Red Raider basketball games until he was 95.

Mr. Robison's devotion overflowed to the community. He served the Lubbock Rotary Club for 40 years, and the Westminster Presbyterian Church named its park in honor of Mr. Robison, a church elder, and his wife, Stephanie.

His student jersey number—appropriately, the number one—hangs retired in the university's United Spirit Arena. Former head basketball coach Bob Knight permanently designated a Polk Robison chair next to the team's bench at every home game, bearing the name of this university legend.

Mr. Robison cared deeply for his family: his wife, the late Stephanie Corley Robison and his three children, Bill, Kay, and Anne. He also made a lasting impression on his players for his professionalism, caring nature, and motivation. He enjoyed seeing them not only grow as athletes, but grow into men.

Those from District 19, including myself, will miss Mr. Robison's enthusiasm for life, dedication to improvement, and tenacity in making Texas Tech a respected and outstanding institution.

**TRIBUTE TO SPECIAL OLYMPICS
INTERNATIONAL**

HON. KENNY C. HULSHOF

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 17, 2008

Mr. HULSHOF. Madam Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the 40th anniversary of an organization that has profoundly enriched the lives of individuals with intellectual disabilities and society as a whole through sports competition. Special Olympics International has promoted the benefits of sports competition for individuals with intellectual disabilities since 1968, when Eunice Kennedy Shriver founded the Special Olympics and convened its first International Games in Chicago.

Two years later, in 1971, Special Olympics Missouri opened its doors and started programs for Missourians with intellectual disabilities. For more than 36 years, Special Olympics Missouri has been providing sports training and competitions for athletes ages 8 and up.

The first Missouri Summer Games were held in 1975, that same year Missouri Special Olympics sent its first athletes to International Summer Games. Except for a brief hiatus in Columbia, Missouri—my hometown—the State Summer Games have been held at Fort Leonard Wood.

Today, Missourians from the ages of 8 to 80 compete in Special Olympics, with an average age around 25. Special Olympics provide year-round sports training and athletics competition for Missouri's children and adults with intellectual disabilities. Special Olympics Missouri currently serves more than 15,000 athletes with mental disabilities, in 19 sports, at 152 competitions throughout Missouri, with 4 statewide competitions, and more than 1,370 of Missouri's finest citizens who serve as volunteer coaches. Special Olympics Missouri athletes have participated in competitions all over the World from Ames, Iowa in our own backyard to Anchorage, Alaska, Toronto, Canada, Dublin, Ireland, Nagano, Japan, and just last year—Shanghai, China.

Through sports, these individuals develop improved physical fitness and motor skills, greater self-confidence, and a more positive self-image.

My colleagues know that as Co-Chair of the Congressional Caucus on Youth Sports, I wholeheartedly believe that sports involvement improves one's health, character, and leadership skills. The Caucus believes in promoting the values of sportsmanship, civility, respect, safety, fun and fitness among the players, coaches, parents, and officials. I am proud to tell you that Special Olympics promotes these same values in its programs and especially in its Healthy Athletes and Unified Sports programs.

In recent years, Special Olympics Missouri has expanded its reach to address health and fitness issues unique to individuals with intellectual disabilities. The Healthy Athletes Program provides health screenings in conjunction with competitions.

Special Olympics Unified Sports is a program that combines approximately equal numbers of Special Olympics athletes and athletes without mental disabilities (called Partners) on sports teams for training and competition. Throughout the year, in a variety of sports ranging from basketball to golf to figure skating, Unified Sports athletes improve their physical fitness, sharpen their skills, challenge the competition and have fun, too.

The concept of combining athletes with mental disabilities and those without was first introduced in the mid-1980s to provide another level of challenge for higher ability athletes and to promote equality and inclusion. Today, the initiative includes virtually all Special Olympics sports.

Unified Sports enables athletes to:

Learn new sports, develop higher-level sports skills and have new competition experiences;

Experience a sense of meaningful inclusion, as each athlete is ensured of playing a valued role on the team;

Socialize with peers and form friendships (the initiative provides a forum for positive social interaction between teammates and often leads to long-lasting friendships) and;

Participate in their communities and have choices outside of Special Olympics.

In 1997, TIME magazine published a story about a Unified Sports partner from Missouri, Ryan Brimer of Boonville.

The Missouri Police Chiefs Association has been a big supporter of Special Olympics Missouri through its Law Enforcement Torch Run. What began as a 30-mile run is now a four-day relay that covers more than 950 miles and 1,000 runners. Now more than a run, the

Torch Run is a campaign to raise awareness and funds for Special Olympics. It originates at 25 different locations around the State of Missouri and ends at the State Summer Games. Nearly 200 agencies and 2,500 officers volunteer all year to make the Torch Run happen. In fact, Missouri's event consistently ranks as one of the top ten fundraising Torch Runs in the world. I am proud of Missouri's law enforcement officers who give of their time for this noble cause.

Special Olympics themes of inclusion, health, sportsmanship, leadership, and fun in sports make the world and Missouri a better place for individuals with and without disabilities. I am proud to congratulate Special Olympics on its years of achievement and I thank Special Olympics on behalf of all Missourians.

TRIBUTE TO MARGARET SULLIVAN WILSON

HON. JOE COURTNEY

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 17, 2008

Mr. COURTNEY. Madam Speaker, I rise to honor the memory of an outstanding citizen and constituent. Margaret Sullivan Wilson of Norwich, Connecticut passed away on Saturday July 12th. I want to take this opportunity to express my condolences and offer my prayers to her family, as well as honor her service to her community.

After graduating from Willimantic State Teachers' College and getting her Masters in Education from the University of Connecticut, Peg Sullivan returned home to Norwich, Connecticut to begin a teaching career. After 44 years of dedicated instruction—from elementary school to college—she retired as an Executive Dean at Eastern Connecticut State University, where she was honored in 2006 by the dedication of the Margaret S. Wilson Child Family Development Complex.

Her retirement from teaching did not end her tireless commitment to helping others. Peg was the President of the Thames Valley Council for Community Action; President of the Connecticut Mental Health Association; founder of Norwich, Connecticut's Head Start program; and in 2004, she founded the Norwich Historical Society. She also served on the Blue Ribbon Commission for the University of Connecticut Health Center, the White House Conference on Children and the National Commission to Reduce Infant Mortality.

She also dedicated herself to the change she believed would help her compatriots. She served on the Norwich Board of Education, the Democratic Town Committee and as a delegate to the 1968 and 1972 Democratic National Conventions.

Her dedication to early childhood education and educational reform of all kinds did not go unnoticed. She was honored by the Norwich Citizen of the Year Award in 1970 and Natchaug Hospital Lifetime Achievement Award in May of this year.

Peg Wilson will live on through the memory of her achievements and the achievements by those she inspired. Peg, we in Congress honor your great service and you will truly be missed.

IN HONOR OF MANUEL SANTANA

HON. SAM FARR

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 17, 2008

Mr. FARR. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and memory of Manuel Santana, Santa Cruz County's 2008 Artist of the Year and beloved contributor to Central Coast art. He sadly passed away July 8, 2008, ten days before he was to present his award-winning work at the Museum of Art & History in Santa Cruz.

Mr. Santana was born on March 31, 1927, to a family of Mexican descent, and began demonstrating his artistic talent in his youth, drawing bugs and collecting comic books. He grew up in Los Angeles, initially pursuing a career as a teacher but later discovering his talent as an artist. After moving to Santa Cruz in 1961, Manuel worked diligently as owner of the restaurants Manuel's in Aptos and Jardines de San Juan in San Juan Bautista, all while caring for his family.

Manuel's art incorporates a deep connection to Mexican traditions, as well as politics and social movements like that of César Chávez. The numerous sculptures, paintings, and acrylics he produced display a vibrant use of colors, which provide new aspects of the pieces with each view.

In addition to art, Mr. Santana was also intimately involved in the community. He founded the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Convocation at the University of California Santa Cruz, served on the University of California's Water Resources Advisory Board and the Board of Directors for the Bear Republic Theatre Company, and was president and lifetime board member of the Cabrillo Music Festival. He also was president of the Central Coast Counties Development Corporation, working to organize and empower farm workers in Monterey County.

Many people were touched by Manny's generous and enlightening spirit, and his passing leaves our community greatly saddened. Madam Speaker, on behalf of the House, I would like to extend our nation's deep gratitude for Manuel Santana's commitment to his local community. I know I speak for every Member of Congress in offering my condolences to the entire Santana family: his daughter Angelina, son Leonardo, daughter-in-law Patricia, and grandchildren Oliver, Joaquin, and Valentin. California has lost a great citizen, but the legacy he leaves behind is priceless.

INTRODUCTION OF LEGISLATION TO ALLOW FOR THE TAX-EX- EMPT BOND FINANCING FOR EMERGENCY MEDICAL AIRCRAFT

HON. DOC HASTINGS

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 17, 2008

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Madam Speaker, today I am introducing legislation with my colleague from Washington state, Congresswoman MCMORRIS RODGERS, that amends the Internal Revenue Code to allow tax-exempt bond financing for airplanes that